

Core Question 3: Is the organization effective and well run?

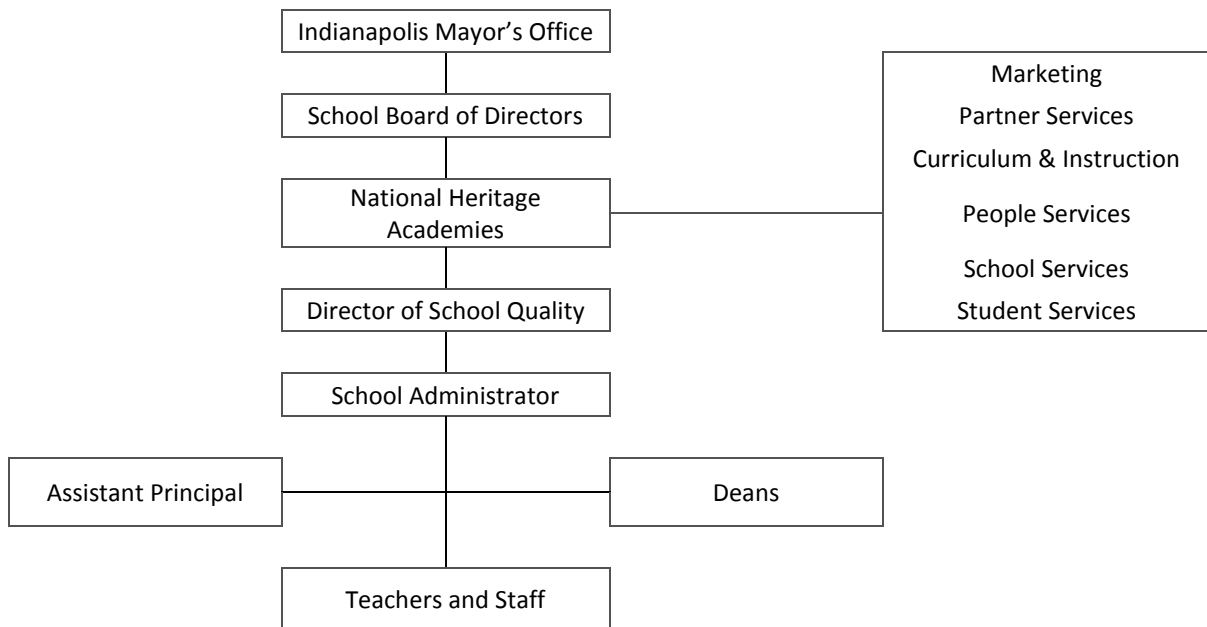
The Governance and Leadership Performance Framework, outlined in Core Question 3, gauges the academic and operational leadership of schools. Core Question 3 consists of five indicators designed to measure schools on how well their school administration and board of directors comply with the terms of their charter agreement, applicable laws, and authorizer expectations.

3.1. Is the school leader strong in his or her academic and organizational leadership?							
Indicator Targets	Does not meet standard	The school leader presents concerns in a majority of the sub-indicators with no evidence of a credible plan to address the issues.					
	Approaching standard	The school leader presents concerns in a minimal number of the sub-indicators and may or may not have a credible plan to address the issues.					
	Meets standard	The school leader complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.					
	Exceeds standard	The school leader consistently and effectively complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.					
3.1 Rating	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
	ES	MS	MS	AS			
Sub-indicator Ratings	Sub-indicators						Rating
	Demonstration of sufficient academic and leadership experience						ES
	Leadership stability in key administrative positions						MS
	Communication with internal and external stakeholders						MS
	Clarity of roles among schools and staff						MS
	Engagement in a continuous process of improvement and establishment of systems for addressing areas of deficiency in a timely manner						DNMS
	Consistency in providing information to and consulting with the schools' board of directors						AS

As the founding leader, the principal of Andrew J. Brown Academy (AJB) has spent several years developing systems, processes, and culture for the school. Her background includes over a decade each of teaching administrative experience. She holds multiple degrees and certifications in education. For the 2013-2014 school year, the administrative staff consisted of the principal and three deans, who shared the responsibilities of academic and instructional oversight, professional development, discipline, and general school operations. Overall, leadership has remained consistent for several years.

The school leader expressed several methods of communicating with staff, the board, and National Heritage Academies (NHA), the school's Educational Management Organization (EMO). This communication included regular classroom observations and individual meetings with staff members, email, phone calls, reports, and newsletters. The school's organizational chart and employee spreadsheet identifies clearly delineated roles and responsibilities of school staff, including the principal, deans, teachers, office staff, and support positions.

Organizational Chart



During the 2013-2014 school year, the principal struggled to analyze school data and respond in an effective manner to positively affect student outcomes. In 2013, the Indiana Department of Education identified AJB as a "Focus School" for low ISTEP+ proficiency and growth. To monitor progress during the 2013-2014 school year, AJB used formative assessments, including Acuity and NWEA Measures of Academic Progress. To address declining academic performance these assessments, the school incorporated a few interventions, including Saturday school. However, students continued to perform low and AJB's 2013-2014 ISTEP+ results showed a significant decrease in both proficiency and growth, demonstrating a lack of appropriate mid-year interventions.

The principal provided reports at every board meeting that detailed several initiatives and programs occurring at the school. She regularly shared the school calendar, field trips, and staffing updates. However, given AJB's designation as a "Focus School", reviewing academic data should have been a priority for both the school leader and the board, but this rarely occurred.

For the reasons stated above, Andrew J. Brown Academy is approaching standard on school leadership.

3.2. Does the school satisfactorily comply with all its organizational structure and governance obligations?							
Indicator Targets	Does not meet standard		The school presents concerns in a majority of the sub-indicators with no evidence of a credible plan to address the issues.				
	Approaching standard		The school presents concerns in a minimal number of the sub-indicators and may or may not have a credible plan to address the issues.				
	Meets standard		The school complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.				
	Exceeds standard		The school consistently and effectively complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.				
3.2 Rating	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
	MS	MS	MS	MS			
Sub-indicator Ratings	Sub-indicators						Rating
	Submission of all required compliance documentation in a timely manner as set forth by the Mayor's Office, including but not limited to: meeting minutes and schedules, board member information, compliance reports and employee documentation						ES
	Compliance with the terms of its charter, including amendments, school policies and regulations, and applicable federal and state laws						MS
	Proactive and productive collaboration with its board and/or management organization (if applicable) in meeting governance obligations						MS
	Active participation in scheduled meetings with OEI, including the submission of required documentation by deadlines						MS

Andrew J. Brown Academy contracts with National Heritage Academies (NHA) as its Education Management Organization (EMO). One of the services NHA provides is managing the school's compliance with the Mayor's Office, the Indiana Department of Education, and state and federal laws. For the 2013-2014 school year, NHA submitted all documentation on time or early.

Further, NHA worked with the school and the board to oversee compliance with the charter agreement and in meeting governance obligations. An NHA representative attended every board meeting to provide operational support and oversight (including meeting agendas and adherence to board policies and bylaws) and to ensure alignment between the school, the board, and the EMO. The principal was actively engaged in all scheduled meetings with OEI.

Due to NHA's consistent compliance management, AJB is meeting standard on this indicator.

3.3. Is the school's board active, knowledgeable, and does it abide by appropriate policies, systems, and processes in its oversight?							
Indicator Targets	Does not meet standard		The school presents concerns in a majority of the sub-indicators with no evidence of a credible plan to address the issues.				
	Approaching standard		The school presents concerns in a minimal number of the sub-indicators and may or may not have a credible plan to address the issues.				
	Meets standard		The school complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.				
	Exceeds standard		The school consistently and effectively complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.				
3.3 Rating	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
	MS	MS	AS	AS			
Sub-indicator Ratings	Sub-indicators						Rating
	Timely communication of organizational, leadership, academic, fiscal, or facility deficiencies to the Mayor's Office; or when the school's management company (if applicable) fails to meet its obligations as set forth in the charter						AS
	Clear understanding of the mission and vision of the school						MS
	Adherence to board policies and procedures, including those established in the by-laws, and revision of policies and procedures, as necessary						AS
	Recruitment and selection of members that are knowledgeable, represent diverse skill sets, and act in the best interest of the school and establishment of systems for member orientation and training						AS
	Effective and transparent management of conflicts of interest						MS
	Collaboration with school leadership that is fair, timely, consistent, and transparent in handling complaints or concerns						MS
	Adherence to its charter agreement as it pertains to governance structure						MS
	Holding of all meetings in accordance with Indiana Open Door Law						MS

During the 2013-2014 school year, AJB's board was led by the founding board president and was comprised of six directors with backgrounds in education, finance, business, law, and community engagement. Additionally, in an effort to ensure alignment between the board and EMO, a NHA representative attended every meeting. While the board and NHA maintained consistent communication with the Mayor's Office (OEI), poor academic performance was never raised as a concern and thus, went undiscussed until ISTEP+ results were released at the end of the school year.

All official board and school documents were branded with AJB's mission and all board directors and representatives demonstrated a clear understanding of the mission. Board meeting minutes and notes reflect discussions that revolved around supporting the school and principal.

As noted in 3.2, NHA provided operational support and oversight for governance obligations. While NHA fulfilled this obligation, it was apparent that the board was reliant upon NHA to remain in compliance with governance obligations. For example, NHA ensures compliance with Indiana Open Door Law (through posting meeting notices and providing minutes), sets the meeting agendas, and informs the board of policies and procedures (such as when terms are expiring and when it is necessary to vote for officers). When the board roster dropped to four directors, it was NHA who brought to the board's attention the need to recruit additional directors to fulfil board bylaw requirements of five officers. This raises some concern over the board's capacity to independently manage governance obligations.

Skill Sets Represented on Board

Finance



Education



Business



Legal



Community



Board Overview

Andrew J. Brown Charter School, Inc. holds the charter for Andrew J. Brown Academy.

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Members

majority

Required for Quorum

The AJB board holds 7 meetings per year.

The board contracts with an Education Management Organization, National Heritage Academies (NHA), to provide services for the school.

The AJB board regularly met quorum during the 2013-2014 school year, but spent half of the year with only four directors. It was able to recruit two additional directors before the end of the school year who added additional skillsets and experience to the board. With the diverse set of skills on the board, AJB would benefit from all of the directors being more engaged in the governance process. Meeting minutes and notes demonstrate discussions and questions primarily driven by two to three of the directors.

During the 2013-2014 school year, NHA handled the majority of governance-related responsibilities and ensured that the board remained in compliance with the board's bylaws, policies, and Indiana Open Door Law. For these reasons, the board is approaching standard on this indicator.

3.4. Does the school's board work to foster a school environment that is viable and effective?							
Indicator Targets	Does not meet standard		The school presents concerns in a majority of the sub-indicators with no evidence of a credible plan to address the issues.				
	Approaching standard		The school presents concerns in a minimal number of the sub-indicators and may or may not have a credible plan to address the issues.				
	Meets standard		The school complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.				
	Exceeds standard		The school consistently and effectively complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.				
3.4 Rating	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
	n/a	n/a	n/a	DNMS			
Sub-indicator Ratings	Sub-indicators						Rating
	Regular communication with school leadership and/or its management company						MS
	Annual utilization of a performance based evaluation to assess its own performance, that of the school leader, and management organization (if applicable)						DNMS
	Collaboration with the school leader to establish clear objectives, priorities, and goals						DNMS
	Interaction with school leader that is conducive to the success of the school, including requesting and disseminating information in a timely manner, providing continuous and constructive feedback, and engaging the school leader in school improvement plans						AS

During the 2013-2014 school year, NHA provided support in the areas of governance compliance and management, human resources, facilities, accounting, contracts and legal services, professional development, and curriculum. They provided up to date information in these areas at critical times throughout the year and maintained consistent communication with both the board and the Mayor's Office.

One of the specific responsibilities of NHA is to provide an annual evaluation of the school principal. While NHA did provide an evaluation for the 2013-2014 school year, it was not reviewed by the board, nor was there any objective measurement or discussion of principal performance. Additionally, the board did not use a formalized process or tool to assess its own performance or the performance of NHA. The lack of formal and informal review processes for the principal, NHA, and the board hindered their ability to assess and reflect on performance throughout the year and to create meaningful school improvement plans.

During the 2013-2014 school year, the board, principal, and NHA all acted in a professional and respectful manner with a high level of mutual respect among all parties. While this collegiality created a positive environment, there were few objective discussions around goals, progress, and school improvement. This lack of progress monitoring fostered a lack of urgency between the board and school leader, and it ultimately contributed to the school's poor academic results. Due to the lack of formalized monitoring and evaluation systems, the board **does not meet standard** for school and board environment.

3.5. Does the school comply with applicable laws, regulations, and provisions of the charter agreement relating to the safety and security of the facility?							
Indicator Targets	Does not meet standard		The school presents concerns in a majority of the sub-indicators with no evidence of a credible plan to address the issues.				
	Approaching standard		The school presents concerns in a minimal number of the sub-indicators and may or may not have a credible plan to address the issues.				
	Meets standard		The school complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.				
	Exceeds standard		The school consistently and effectively complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.				
3.5 Rating	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
	MS	MS	MS	MS			
Sub-indicator Ratings	Sub-indicators						Rating
	Health and safety code requirements						MS
	Facility accessibility						MS
	Updated safety and emergency management plans						MS
	A facility that is well suited to meet the curricular and social needs of the students, faculty, and members of the community						MS

In 2013-14, AJB's facility met all health and safety code requirements and provided a safe environment conducive to learning. The facility's design, size, maintenance, security, equipment and furniture were all adequate to meet the school's needs. The school was accessible to all, including people with physical disabilities. The Mayor's Office monitoring of AJB's compliance with health and safety code requirements did not reveal any significant concerns related to these obligations. Accordingly, the school is **meeting standard** for this indicator for 2013-14.